(19) Europäisches Patentamt
European Patent Office
Office européen des brevets

(11) Publication number: **0 381 249 A2**

(12) EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(21) Application number: **90104361.2**

(51) Int. Cl.5: **G06F 13/26**

(22) Date of filing: **25.06.85**

This application was filed on 07 - 03 - 1990 as a divisional application to the application mentioned under INID code 60.

(30) Priority: **25.06.85 JP 130465/84**

(43) Date of publication of application: **08.08.90 Bulletin 90/32**

(60) Publication number of the earlier application in accordance with Art.76 EPC: **0 166 424**

(84) Designated Contracting States: **DE FR GB IT**

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(54) Data processing apparatus having an input/output controller for controlling interruptions.

(57) A data processing apparatus includes an interruption control unit having an associative memory which is used to store a priority data of an interruption and a mode data designating an interruption operation mode. A sequential scanning data is applied according to a priority order to the associative memory. Thus, the mode data required to operate the interruption can be selected and transferred to an interruption processing unit by comparing the stored priority data with the applied scanning data in the associative memory without control of a central processing unit.

In a content addressable memory (CAM), upon matching of scanning data and interruption priority data, a response signal from the CAM is fed back thereto to read out the contents therefrom.

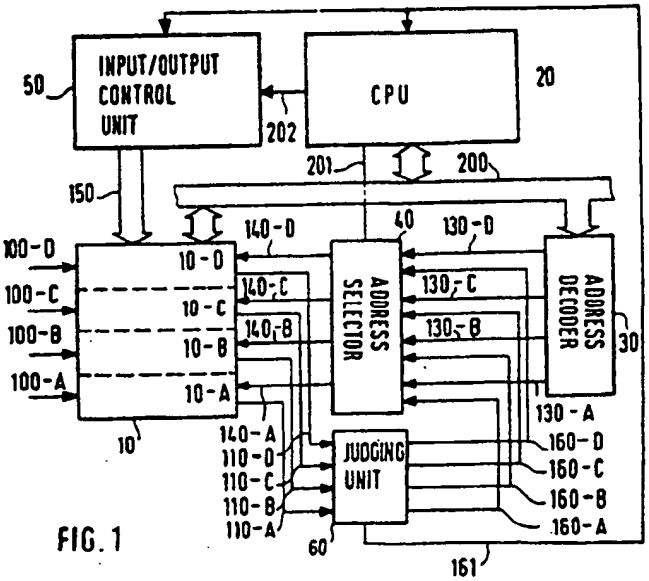

FIG. 1

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DATA PROCESSING APPARATUS HAVING AN INPUT/OUTPUT CONTROLLER FOR CONTROLLING INTERRUPTIONS

Background of the Invention

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a data processing apparatus, and particularly to a data processing apparatus having an input/output controller for controlling interruptions.

Description of the Prior Art

A data processing apparatus such as a microprocessor integrated on a single semiconductor chip has in general an input/output controller which is called an interruption controller. The input/output controller of this type controls an interruption operation of a data processing apparatus. If an interruption request is generated in accordance with a certain factor, the input/output controller receives an interruption request signal and indicates generation of the interruption to a central processing unit (referred to as a "CPU" hereinafter) of the data processing apparatus. The CPU stops a program execution and then executes an interruption operation based on that factor. Thus, a variety of processings can be performed by one data processing apparatus. Therefore, the input/output control, particularly an interruption control, is one of the important features of the data processing apparatus.

Recently, several processing modes have been proposed as the input/output control mode, and the following two processing modes have been typically used in a data processing apparatus.

A first processing mode is a normal interruption mode in which information required to restart the program to be stopped by an interruption are sheltered, and thereafter CPU executes a processing corresponding to the interruption. In this mode, CPU directly executes the interruption operation.

A second processing mode is a specific interruption mode in which CPU stops a program execution without sheltering of the information required to restart the program to be stopped. In this mode, CPU does not directly execute an interruption operation, and therefore, the sheltering of the information is unnecessary. However, the CPU must release a signal bus and/or a memory for an interruption operation by which data is directly transferred between an input/output device (a peripheral device) and a memory. The direct memory access (DMA) is included in this second processing mode.

On the other hand, there are many factors wherein the above-mentioned input/output control (interruption control) is required in an application system using a data processing apparatus. Further, all input/output controls are not always performed in the same processing mode. Moreover, a priority order is to be assigned to a plurality of factors. That is, a variety of factors and processing modes are required in a data processing system. A general-purpose data processor such as a microcomputer requires the input output controller which can designate the priorities and processing modes of the input/output processing at will be accordance with an application system.

In general, the factors can be classified into external and internal ones. The external factors occur in the outside of a data processing apparatus when the outside of the data processing apparatus comes into a special or a predetermined status, such as a power fail, or when an external interruption request signal is generated from a peripheral unit, a DMA controller, another data processing apparatus, or the like. While, the internal factors occur in the inside of the data processing apparatus when an internal interruption signal is generated from internal portions; for example, an internal timer, an analog to digital converter, a digital to analog converter, a serial data interface unit, or the like, which are built in the data processing apparatus. These internal interruption signals are generated, for example, when a predetermined time period has elapsed, when an analog-digital conversion has terminated, or when a serial data has been sent from or received at the interface unit.

In case there are a variety of above-mentioned factors, a plurality of factors may be concurrently generated, or another factor may be generated during the processing of a certain factor. This makes it difficult to judge and control the priorities of the plural factors. For example, in an application system in which an external unit must be driven on real time when a drive signal is produced for each set time of the internal timer, the internal interruption request signal from the internal timer is to be judged with the highest

priority order. In contrast, when an application system requires a high-speed data transmission between a data processing apparatus and an external peripheral unit, an external interruption request signal is to be accepted as soon as possible.

As described above, since the priorities of the input/output controls in one application are different from that of another application, the priorities must be arranged with the optimum order in the required application system.

On the other hand, with respect to the processing modes, they are also variable in the desired application systems. As to the internal timer, for instance, in the case that the driving signal to be sent to the external unit is preliminarily stored in a memory, the driving signal can be taken out of the memory according to the direct memory access (DMA) mode. While, in the case that status of a peripheral unit or an external signal is sampled at every time intervals determined by the internal timer, CPU has to execute the sampling operation by means of the normal interruption mode.

A data processing apparatus proposed in the prior art has been expensive because it requires a complicated control circuit so as to set the priorities and processing modes of the input/output controls at will. In the system at a low price, therefore, the priorities and processing modes are frequently fixed for each factor so that they raise troubles for some applications. If, in the aforementioned examples, the internal input/output control of the internal timer is fixed at a higher priority than the external input/output control, the interruption operation of the internal timer has to be prohibited to change the priorities to raise a trouble that the input/output processing of the internal timer cannot be utilized, in case the data must be inputted at a high speed in response to an external input/output control request signal. On the other hand, the processing modes have been also frequently fixed at a normal interruption mode only. In the aforementioned internal timer application in which the driving signal is outputted on real time to the outside for each set time of the internal timer, the CPU execution has to be temporarily stopped in accordance with the interruption processing. Further, since the DMA mode can not be used, information relating to the CPU execution must be sheltered, and then the interruption program must be searched and read out of an instruction memory. Thus, there also arises a problem that the response time from the detection of time lapse of the internal timer to the signal output to the outside is elongated.

A data processing apparatus according to the preamble part of claim 1 is disclosed in "Proceedings of the Fall Joint Computer Conferences", Houston, Texas, November 17 to 19, 1970, Montvale, New York (US), pp 621 to 627, (J.D. Erwin: "Interrupt Proceeding with Queued Content - Addressable memories"). This device comprises an interrupt unit with an associative memory permitting searches for the largest numerical value on the stored priority data. However, this memory cannot be excessed by interrupt requests directly and therefore needs an input priority logic leading to a complicated and expensive construction. Due to piority logic this device has a low operation speed.

Furthermore, no disclosure is given about a construction or the operation for reading out the contents of the CAM.

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a data processing apparatus in which the priority order can be variably assigned to an interruption processing an can be judged at high speed.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a data processing apparatus which can quickly response to an interruption request signal.

A further object is to provide a data processing apparatus in which a plurality of processing modes can be variably set therein, and a further object of the present invention is to provide a low-cost data processing apparatus in which a priority order and/or processing mode can be easily set and changed in accordance with the application system.

This object is achieved by a data processing apparatus as it is given in claim 1; the dependent claim is related to a further development of the invention.

According to the invention, upon matching of scanning data and interruption priority order data, a response signal from the CAM is fed back thereto to read out the contents therefrom.

This structure in which a feeding back means is provided allows a quick response and it is not general in known CAM's.

According to the present invention, the priority data to be stored in the second memory area of each memory stage can be changed by the CPU, because the priority data is set in the read-write memory (e.g. RAM, PROM). Further, the read-write memory unit has means for comparing the stored priority data with the scanning data. The scanning data is sequentially varied in the predetermined order, e.g., from a data representing the highest priority to that representing the lowest priority. If the first memory area of the memory stage whose second memory area, stores the priority data, which is judged to be coincident with the scanning data, does actually store the interruption request data, the response signal is automatically generated from the memory unit. Thus the CPU can easily recognize the interruption request.

In the present invention, each memory stage may have a third area storing a processing mode (e.g. normal interruption mode, DMA mode) in order to set the processing mode at will in accordance with an application system in which the data processing apparatus of the present invention is employed.

The read-write memory unit may favorably have an associative memory function such as a content-addressable memory. Thus, an interruption request can be searched at a high speed without using the CPU. Furthermore, even if the priority data and/or the processing mode is changed, the scanning operation needs not be changed to search an interruption request.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Fig. 1 is a block diagram showing the data processing apparatus having the input/output controller according to one embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a diagram showing one example of the control data memory unit 10 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a transistor circuit diagram of one cell of the memory unit 10; and

Fig. 4 is a timing chart of a scanning operation.

Detailed Description of the Embodiment

The present invention will be described in the following in connection with the embodiment thereof with reference to the drawings. Fig. 1 is a block diagram showing a data processing apparatus (a data processor) which is equipped with an input/output controller.

In the present embodiment, it is assumed that four interruption factors for the input/output controls are employed, and the portions corresponding to the respective factors are indicated by suffixes A, B, C and C attached thereto.

A control data memory unit 10 has a storage capacity of four words, or four stages, 10-A to 10-D in a manner to correspond to respective factors. Each stage 10-A, 10-B, 10-C, or 10-D comprises a read-write memory to store a plurality of data including. The memory unit 10 further has a read-write circuit for waiting data in the respective memory stages 10-A to 10-D and reading data out of the respective memory stages. The read-write memory of each stage includes a first memory area in which an interruption request data 100-A, 100-B, 100-C or 100-D is stored, a second memory area in which a mask data for allowing or inhibiting an interruption operation is stored, a third memory area which stores a data designating a processing mode, and a fourth memory area which stores a priority data designating a priority of the interruption request data stored in the first memory area of the same stage. The interruption request data is written in the first memory area according to the respective interruption request signal applied to the memory unit 10, while data to be set in the second to fourth memory areas are written by a central processing unit (CPU) 20.

At a start timing or an arbitrary timing of a CPU operation, the CPU 20 sends out an address signal designating a stage of the control data memory unit 10 to an address decoder 30 through a signal bus 200, an access signal 201 to an address selector 40 and data to be stored in the designated stage to the memory unit 10 through the bus 200. The decoded outputs 130-A to 130-D of the address decoder 30 are selected by the address selector 40 in response to the access signal 201 and are transmitted as word designating signals 140-A to 140-D to the control data memory unit 10 so that the selected stage is accessed to reset the first memory area and to write the mask data, the processing mode data and the priority data through the signal bus 200 from the CPU. Under this writing operation, the CPU can set the processing made data and the priority data as required in the application system. The mask data is written in the second area only when a certain interruption request is required to be masked.

Thereafter, when an interruption request signal (100-A, 100-B, 100-C or 100-D) is generated from an interruption source (not shown) according to an interruption factor, it is written into a first memory area of the corresponding memory stage. In this case, the interruption request signals 100-A to 100-D may be generated from an interval interruption source or an external interruption source.

With no access from the CPU 20 to the control data memory unit 10, an input/output processing control unit 50 sequentially generates scanning data to scan each memory word and applies them to the memory unit 10 through a scanning bus 150 which is provided separate from the signal bus 200 coupled to the CPU 20. Therefore, the scanning operation can be performed regardless of the CPU operation. As the result, a multi-interruption operation can be performed as described hereinafter.

In this scanning operation, the scanning data is the same as the priority data stored in the fourth memory area of one of the memory stages 10-A to 10-D. The scanning data is changed one by one in the

order from the data representing the highest priority to that representing the lower priority in every scanning operations. The scanning operation is continuously repeated if no interruption request data is set in the first memory area of each memory stage.

If, however, at least one interruption request data is set in the first area of a memory stage or stages, one of the response signals 110-A to 110-D is generated when the scanning data coincides with the priority data stored in the same memory stage. For example, if the interruption request data is stored in the first area of the memory stage 10-C, the response signal 110-C is generated only when such a scanning data is applied to the memory unit 10 that is the same data as the priority data stored in the fourth area of the memory stage 10-C. When the response signal 110-A, 110-B, 110-C or 110-D is generated, it is sent to a judging unit 60. Upon receipt of the response signal, the judging unit 60 generates a control signal 161 indicating that an interruption is received. The judging unit 60 has storage locations (e.g. latch or register circuits) corresponding to the four response signals 110-A to 110-D. The response signal sent from the memory unit 10 is temporarily stored in the corresponding storage location.

The control signal 161 is applied to both the CUP 20 and the input/output control unit 50 simultaneously. The CPU 20 stops the operation immediately or at a predetermined timing, which is now being performed, in response to the control signal 161 and generates the access signal 201. In response to this access signal 161 the selector 40 selects the output 160-A to 160-D of the judging unit 60. That is, the response signal 110-A, 110-B, 110-C or 110-D which has been latched in the judging unit 60 and applied to the selector 40 as a signal 160-A, 160-B, 160-C or 160-D is sent to the corresponding memory stage of the control data memory unit 10 as an address signal 140-A, 140-B, 140-C or 140-D. For example, if the response signal 110-C is generated, it is sent through the judging unit 60 and the address selector 40 to the memory stage 10-C as the address signal 140-C.

The input/output control unit 50 stops the scanning operation in response to the control signal 161 and stores information indicating the priority order of the scanning data by which the response signal 110 is generated. In other words, the input/output control unit 50 stores such a priority data that is set in the memory stage, e.g. 10-C, from which the response signal, e.g. 110-C is outputted.

On the other hand, all the data stored in the memory stage, e.g. 10-C, which has been designated by the response signal, e.g. 110-C, are read out and transferred to the CPU 20 through the signal bus 200. Thus, the CPU 20 recognizes the read-out data and thereafter, resets the first area (a bit for interruption request data) of the memory stage, e.g. 10-C, from which the data are read out.

Here, the input/output control unit 50 is storing the data designating the accepted priority order and continuously performs subsequent priority scannings for the higher priority than the accepted order. In other words, the priority data to be scanned in the subsequent scanning operation are accepted from the highest one and are changed up to the priority now stored. If the response signals 110-A to 110-D are generated in this operation, the input/output control unit 50 detects that an interruption request with a higher priority than that of the interruption now being processed is newly generated. At this condition, the control signal 161 is applied to the CPU 20. Then the CPU 20 generates the access signal 201 to select the output 160 of the judging unit 60, whereby the control word corresponding to the newly received interruption is sent to the CPU. Thus the CPU can execute a multi-interruption operation.

When one interruption operation is completed, the CPU 20 generates a termination signal 202 to reset the priority being stored in the control unit 50.

In this reset operation, in the case that the interruption with higher priority is accepted during the interruption operation of the low priority, the low priority data of the interruption which has been stopped is set, while in the case that the new interruption is not accepted, the priority data stored is cleared.

As described above, an interruption request signal 100, which may be generated within the data processing apparatus or may be applied from the outside of the data processing apparatus, is written into a first area of the corresponding memory stage in which the processing made data, and the priority data are preliminarily set by the CPU. The control unit 50 scans each memory stage according to the priority order. This scanning can be done independently of the CPU operation. As the result of the scanning, if at least one interruption request signal has been received, the memory unit generates a response signal automatically. The judging unit 60 applies the control signal 161 designating the interruption reception to the CPU 20 and the control unit 50. In response to this control signal 161 the CPU stops an operation and selects the output 130 of the judging unit 60 by controlling the selector 40. Thus, the control word set in the memory stage from which the response signal is generated is automatically sent to the CPU 20 through the signal bus 200.

Fig. 2 shows an embodiment of the control data memory unit 10 of Fig. 1. In this embodiment, control data memory unit, the lines of a five-bit memory cell array are assigned to control words corresponding to the respective interruption factors, whereas the columns are assigned, as shown in broken lines in Fig. 2, to

the data kinds of the interruption request data, the mask data, the processing mode designating data and the priority designating data. On the other hand, the interruption request signals 100-A to 100-D, the response signals 110-A to 110-D and the word designating signals 140-A to 140-D are made identical to those of Fig. 1.

Here, an embodiment of each memory cell will be described in detail with reference to Fig. 3. Fig. 3 is a transistor circuit diagram showing a content-addressable memory (CAM) of one bit (in terms of the CAM cell).

This CAM cell is composed of ten transistors T_1, T_2, ... , and T_{10} for storing data of one bit and is equipped with data input/output codes D and $\overline{D}$ of true and complement, an input node S receiving a cell selecting signal, and an output node C of a response signal. The transistors T_1 and T_2, and T_3 and T_4, which are connected in series between a power supply V_{DD} and the ground, constitute together an inverter circuit and act as a flip-flop to store the data of one bit.

In case the stored data of the cell is read out, the cell selecting signal S is generated to turn-on the switching transistors T_5 and T_6. Thus, data stored in the flip-flop is read out of the nodes D and $\overline{D}$. In case data is written in the cell, the true and complement of data to be written are applied to the nodes D and $\overline{D}$, respectively, when the cell selecting signal S is generated, and the data is written in the flip-flop.

Here, when the cell is to be stored with a logical value 1, the node between the transistors T_1 and T_2 is set at a high level, and the node between the transistors T_3 and T_4 is set at a low level. In case a logical value 0 is to be stored, on the contrary, the node between the transistors T_1 and T_2 is set at the low level, and the node between the transistors T_3 and T_4 is set at the high level. The four transistors T_7 to T_{10} are provided for comparing the content stored in the cell with a data received at the nodes D and $\overline{D}$. If the both data are the same, the response signal is outputted from the node C.

The CAM cell shown in Fig. 3 can be used in the second area (mask data), the third area (processing mode) and the fourth area (priority data), but must be modified to use in the first area (request data). That is, a CAM cell of the first area has to be set in response to an interruption request signal 100. In order to satisfy this set function, a transistors T_{20} to T_{23} may be added in parallel to the transistor T_3. The transistors T_{20} to T_{23} turn on in response to the interruption request signals 100-A to 100-D, respectively. Therefore, when the interruption request signals are applied to the transistors T_{20} to T_{23}, a logical value 1 is set in the CAM cell of the first area.

In Fig. 2, four transistors T_{24} to T_{27} act as pull-up transistors for the nodes C of each CAM cell. That is, the logical value 1 as the response signals 110-A to 110-D is taken out when at least one of the transistors T_7 and T_8 and at least one of the transistors T_9 and T_{10} are turned off. In other words, if any node C of the control word is coupled to the ground, the response signal with the logical value 0 is generated. A buffer circuit 70 is made operative, when the CPU 20 writes and sets the control words and when the input/output control unit 50 scanns the control words and reads out the control words when the designating signals 140-A to 140-C are applied to the nodes S as the designating signals 140-A to 140-D.

Here, the comparison operation of the memory unit 10 will be described in below. Table 1 shows a status of the node C of one CAM cell when the cell data is compared with the scanning data.

Table 1

			States of Transistors				
Scanning Data Input D	Scanning Data Input $\overline{D}$	Cell Data	T_7	T_8	T_9	T_{10}	Node C
0	0	0	ON	OFF	OFF	OFF	1
0	0	1	OFF	OFF	ON	OFF	1
0	1	0	ON	OFF	OFF	ON	1
0	1	1	OFF	OFF	ON	ON	0
1	0	0	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	0
1	0	1	OFF	ON	ON	OFF	1
1	1	0	ON	ON	OFF	ON	0
1	1	1	OFF	ON	ON	ON	0

As shown in Table 1, when a scanning data 0 (D = 0, $\overline{D}$ = 1) is applied the nodes D and $\overline{D}$, the node

C becomes 1 when the cell data is 0, while the node C becomes 0 when the cell data is 1. When a scanning data 1 ($D = 1$, $\overline{D} = 0$) is applied, the node C becomes 0 when the cell data is 1, while it becomes 1 when the cell data is 0. Further, when 0 is applied to both the nodes D and $\overline{D}$, respectively, the node C becomes 1 regardless of the cell data. On the other hand, when 1 is applied to both the nodes D and $\overline{D}$, respectively, the node C becomes 0 regardless of the cell data. In other words, the inverted logical input data are applied to the nodes D and $\overline{D}$, an exclusive OR signal indicating the incoincidence between the input data and the stored cell data is generated at the node C so that the comparison can be performed. In case the logical data 0 is applied to both the nodes D and $\overline{D}$, the logical data 1 equivalent to that of the coincidence is generated independently of the stored cell data so that the comparison with the stored content can be masked. In case the logical data 1 is applied to the nodes D and $\overline{D}$, the logical value 0 is generated independently of the stored cell data so that the result of the incoincidence can be unconditionally outputtted.

By arranging the CAM cell of Fig. 3 to have a structure of lines and columns thereby to couple the node C in parallel, it is possible to realize the control data memory unit 10 which can judge the content in terms of words.

The operations of the present embodiment will be described in the following with reference to the time chart of Fig. 4.

In Fig. 4, as is represented by the first interruption factor A, a series of input/output control sequence of the setting of the control data, the scanning of the control data memory unit 10, the generation of the (interruption) request, and the start of the input/output processing are expressed in terms of the word designating signal 140-A of the priority scanning counter and the control data memory unit 10, the data input/output line signals B_1 to B_5 and $\overline{B}_1$ to $\overline{B}_5$, the processing request signal 100-A and the response signal 110-A.

First of all, when the control data about the factor A is set by the central processing unit 20. As described with reference to Fig. 2, the high level is generated at the data line B_n (wherein n corresponds to the bit position and takes a value of 1 to 5) whereas the low level is generated at the data line $\overline{B}_n$ in case the logical value 1 is to be written in. The low level is generated at the data line B_n whereas the high level is generated at the data line $\overline{B}_n$ in case the logical value 0 is to be written in.

In the time chart of Fig. 4: the request data of first area is cleared to the logical data 0; the mask data of the second area is set at the logical data 1 to allow the processing request; the processing mode designating data of the third area is set at the logical data 0 to designate a normal interruption operation; and the priority designating data of two bits in the further area are set at the logical values 0 and 1, respectively, to designate the second priority order. When the settings of the control data are thus completed, the scanning operation of the input/output control unit 50 is started. At this time, the control unit 50 sends the data 1 as the first area scanning data ($B_5 = 1$, $\overline{B}_5 = 0$), the data 1 as the second area scanning data ($B_4 = 1$, $\overline{B}_4 = 0$), the mask data as the third area scanning data ($B_3 = 0$, $\overline{B}_3 = 0$) and the priority data as the fourth area scanning data (B_1, $\overline{B}_1$, B_2, $\overline{B}_2$) to the memory unit 10. The priority data is changed from the highest order (1, 1) to the lowest order (0, 0) as shown in Fig. 4.

In the time chart of Fig. 4, it is judged that the interruption request data of the first area is at the logical data 1 indicating the generation of the processing request, that the mask data of the second area is at the logical data indicating the allowing state, and that the priority designating data of the fourth area are at the data coincident with the values of the priority scanning counter. Incidentally, the processing mode designating data of third area is so controlled by setting the data lines B_3 and $\overline{B}_3$ at the low level that they may not be the target of judgement. Before the interruption request signal 100-A is generated, the processing request data of the first area is at the logical data 0 so that the response signal 110-A is not generated even if other conditions are satisfied. After the request signal 100-A is generated so that the request data is set, the response signal 110-A is generated when the data of the priority scanning counter and the priority designating data are coincident, i.e., when the second priority order is scanned, and the response signal 110-A is stored in the judging unit 60.

When the aforementioned response signal 110-A is generated, the CPU 20 starts the input/output processings. At this time, the word selecting signal 140-A is generated on the basis of the response signal stored in the judging unit 60, and the respective stored bit data of the columns having generated the responses are extracted to the data lines B_n and $\overline{B}_n$ and transmitted via the buffer circuit 70 to the CPU 20. This CPU 20 executes the interruption operation according to a normal interruption because it judges the data of the third area in the control word transmitted at the logical value 0. Next, while the word selecting signal 140-A based upon the aforementioned response word data being generated, the signal at the low level is generated on the data line B_5 whereas the signal at the high level is generated on the data line $\overline{B}_5$, and the logical value 0 indicating the reception of the processing request is stored into the first area of the

control word A.

In the present embodiment, the control data memory unit 10 uses wholly the CAM cells. However, the processing mode designating data need be neither compared nor judged so that the cells having a less number of transistors can be used. Since the interruption request data and the mask data have a limited number of logical data to be judged, the transistors in the CAM cells can be eliminated so that the input/output control unit 50 at a lower price can be realized.

According to the present invention, the data for designating the modes and priorities of the interruption processings can be stored in the memory element array of the cells having the less number of transistors to control the input/output processing start. As a result, the data processing apparatus to be realized by the semiconductor integrated circuit such as the microcomputer can have its chip area reduced to exhibit an outstanding effect for reducing its price.

Claims

1. A data processing apparatus comprising: A central processing unit (20); a plurality of stages (10-A to 10-D); a bus (200) interconnecting said control processing unit and said plurality of stages; means (50) for supplying scanning data to each of said plurality of stages; each of said plurality of stages including first storage means for storing interruption request data in response to a corresponding one of interruption request signals (100-A to 100-D) and second storage means for storing interruption priority order data, and each of said plurality of stages generating a response signal (100-A, B, C or D) when said first storage means thereof stores the interruption request data at the time when the content of said scanning data coincident with the interruption priority order data stored in said second storage means thereof; and means (60) coupled to said plurality of stages for generating an interruption reception signal (161) to said central processing unit in response to said response signal, **characterized** in that each of said plurality of stages (10-A to 10-D) further includes a selection terminal supplied with selection signal (140-A, B, C or D) and that said data processing apparatus further comprises means (60, 40) for feeding back said response signal (110-A, B, C or D) as said selection signal to said selection terminal of the stage (10-A, B, C or D) that has generated said response signal and means (70) for reading out the contents of said first and second storage means of the stage selected by the feed-back response signal onto said bus (220).

2. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, **characterized** in that said data processing apparatus further comprises an address decoder (30) coupled to said bus (200) to receive address information from said central pro cessing unit (20), said address decoder (30) decodes said address information and produces a decoded signal (130-A, B, C or D) for designating one of said plurality of stages (10-A to 10-D), and that said feeding back means includes judging means (60) for temporarily storing said response signal (110-A, B, C, or D) and for producing an output signal (160-A, B, C or D) correspondingly and selector means (40) controlled by said central processing unit (20) to select one of the decoded signal from said address decoder (30) and the output signal from said judging means (60) and to supply the selected signal as said selection signal to said selection terminal of one of said stages (10-A, B, C and D).

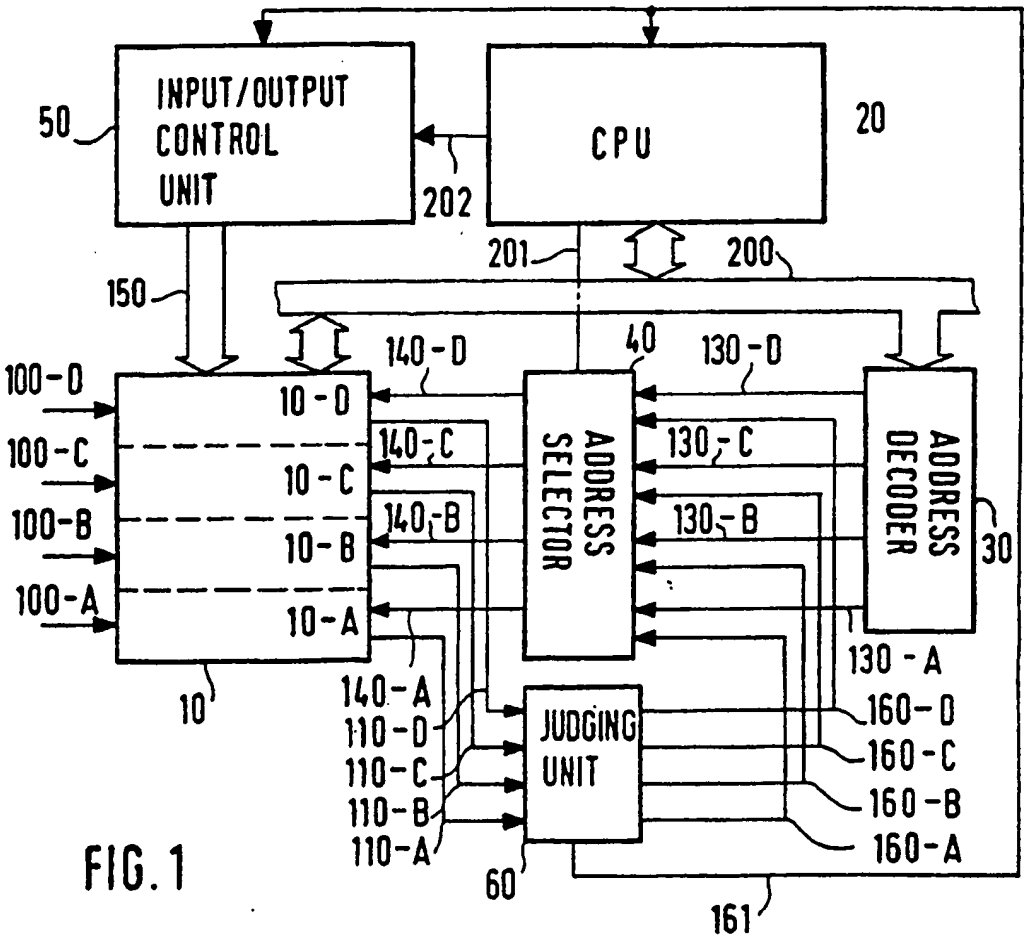

INPUT/OUTPUT CONTROL UNIT
50
CPU
20
202
201
200
150
140-D
40
130-D
100-D
10-D
100-C
10-C
140-C
130-C
100-B
10-B
140-B
130-B
100-A
10-A
ADDRESS SELECTOR
ADDRESS DECODER
30
130-A
10
140-A
110-D
110-C
110-B
110-A
JUDGING UNIT
160-D
160-C
160-B
160-A
60
161

FIG. 1

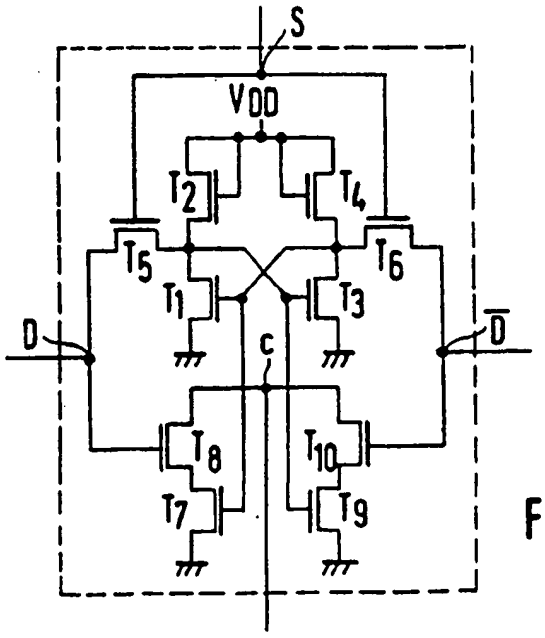

S
VDD
T2
T4
T5
T6
T1
T3
D
C
D
T8
T10
T7
T9

FIG. 3

FIG. 2

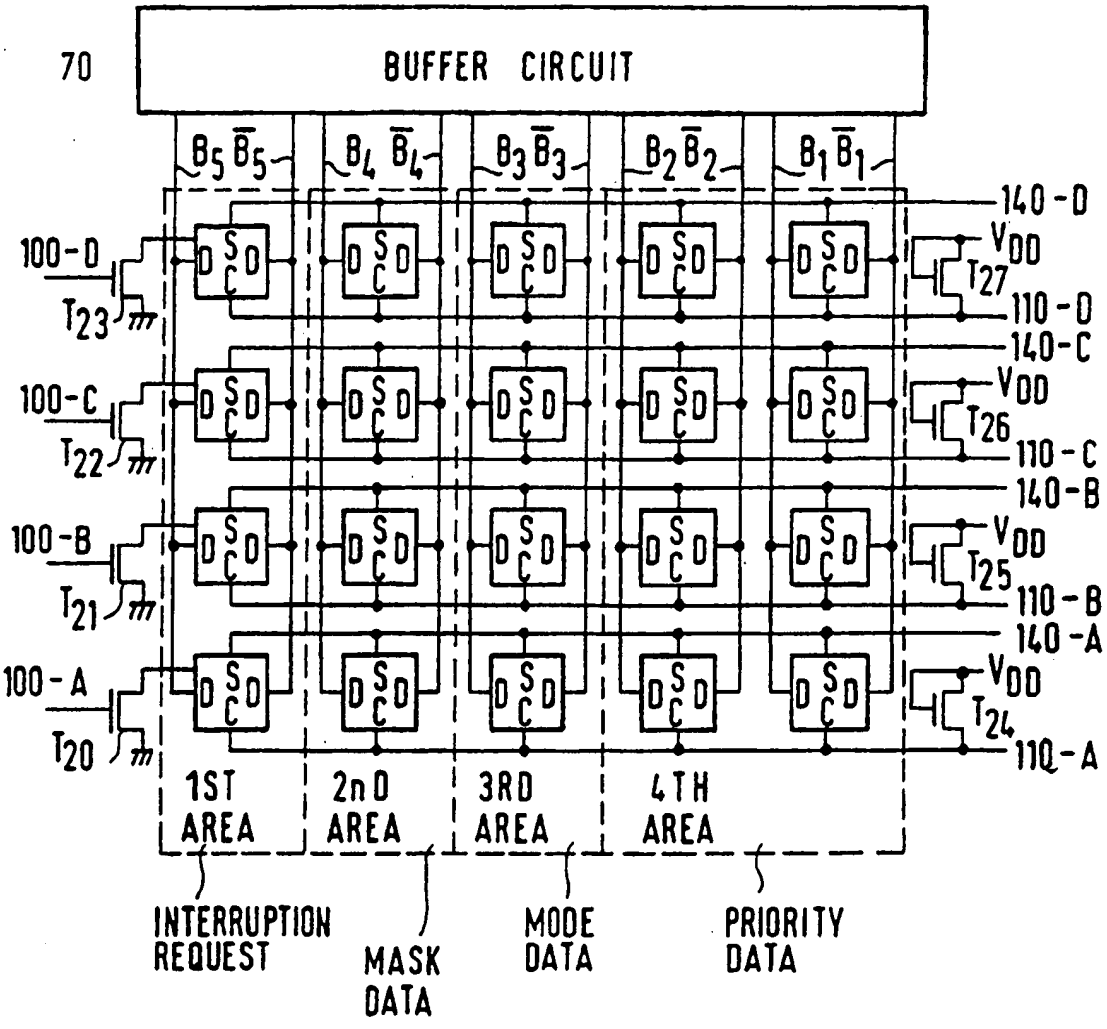
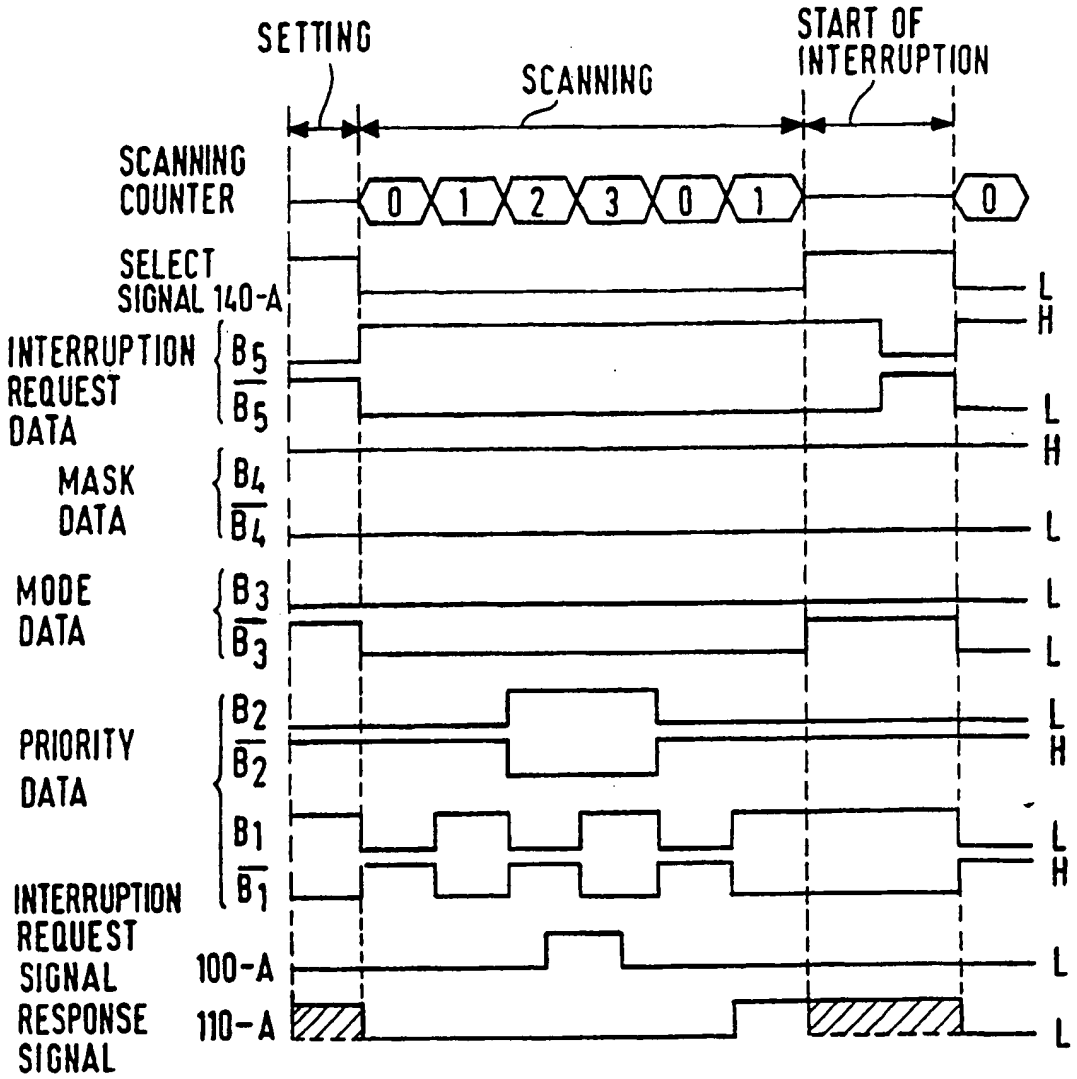

70
BUFFER CIRCUIT
B5 B̄5
B4 B̄4
B3 B̄3
B2 B̄2
B1 B̄1
140-D
100-D
T23
VDD
T27
110-D
140-C
100-C
T22
VDD
T26
110-C
140-B
100-B
T21
VDD
T25
110-B
140-A
100-A
T20
VDD
T24
110-A
1ST AREA
2nD AREA
3RD AREA
4TH AREA
INTERRUPTION REQUEST
MASK DATA
MODE DATA
PRIORITY DATA

FIG. 4


SETTING
SCANNING
START OF INTERRUPTION
SCANNING COUNTER
0 1 2 3 0 1 0
SELECT SIGNAL 140-A
INTERRUPTION REQUEST DATA
B5
B5
MASK DATA
B4
B4
MODE DATA
B3
B3
PRIORITY DATA
B2
B2
B1
B1
INTERRUPTION REQUEST SIGNAL 100-A
RESPONSE SIGNAL 110-A
L
H